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In this issue:

THE VIETNAMESE CINEMA,
A NASCENT AND LIVELY ART

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Information Weekly - E.O. 46 from Hung Do Street, Hanoi - Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

THE SON MY MASSACRE A Horrible Crime

D.R.V.N. FOREIGN MINISTRY DENOUNCES

Excerpts
from Nov. 24, 1968 Statement

On March 25, 1968, the Central Truong Bo Committee of the National Front for Liberation issued an emergency statement denouncing the American troops for massacring over 500 civilians in Son My village (Quang Ngai province) on March 16, 1968. By that time, the U.S. authorities sought every way to deny and cover the crime. But this heinous atrocity has now been exposed to the public and has been arousing a wave of indignation in the United States and the world. A number of Americans who took part in, or witnessed, the aforesaid mass murder have valiantly revealed part of the reality.

Lake Ba Lang An, Keng H'Ring, Tay Ninh, Thu Duc jail, Da Nang, Phu Loi, etc., the case of Son My was but one of the innumerable abominable crimes perpetrated by the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam. They have put into operation a huge war machine to exterminate a nation of over 30 million people. They have snipped on a territory of only over 300,000 square kilometres a number of bombs greater than that used in World War II. They have "killed all, burned all, destroyed all" in their "pacification" raids throughout South Viet Nam. They have carried out B-52 carpet bombings and used napalm bombs and toxic chemicals to raze entire hamlets and entire areas in South Viet Nam. They have tortured and massacred in the most barbarous manner those arrested by them. The U.S. war of aggression is a genocidal war against the Vietnamese people. This loathsome crime, which will be forever cursed, has itself contradicted the professed U.S. "defence of the freedom" and "respect for the right to self-determination" of the South Vietnamese people.

The Bertrand Russell International Tribunal and outstanding lawyers in the world and in the United States have come to the obvious conclusion that the U.S. has committed the crime of war, the crime of genocide in Viet Nam. The Thieu-Ky-Khem puppet administration is a clique of traitors to the Vietnamese nation and is lending a hand to the U.S. aggressors in massacring the South Vietnamese people and trying to cover up their crimes. The responsibility here is not only that of the criminals in Son My, of the U.S. puppet troops having perpetrated crimes in South Viet Nam, of the American pilots having bombed and strafed the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, but also that of the U.S. ruling circles who have unleashed a war of aggression against Viet Nam and committed innumerable and abominable crimes against the Vietnamese people.

To put an end to the U.S. aggression and the Vietnamese people, the U.S. aggressors must

(Continued page 2)

RECENT disclosures of the massacre of more than 500 civilians by American troops during a sweep in South Viet Nam on March 16, 1968 have deeply shocked the world and been severely censured by public opinion. This appalling incident occurred nearly 20 months ago. In its issues of April 22, 1968, No. 106 and May 27, 1968, No. 106 (see article entitled "Son My Mothers Call for Vengeance," Viet Nam Courier No. 106, reprinted in this issue, page 5) Viet Nam Courier had already brought this crime to light. Evidence so far published by U.S. and other foreign newspapers and agencies has testified to the complete veracity of our story.

The New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, Life Magazine, the Plain Dealer, the Chicago Sun Times, AP, UPI, AFP, Reuter, etc., have released detailed accounts of the massacre, photographs taken by Joseph Haeberle, confessions volunteered by GIs

involved like Paul Macillo, Michael Bernhardt, Ronald Lee Ridenhour, Charles A. West, Charles Grover, Michael B. Terry, and evidence supplied by survivors of the Son My massacre including Do Hoa, Do Cuong Chue, Phan Dat and Do Da (the latter during an interview showed his right hand with fingers blown off by a shot). All told of the same story which confirms the following facts, summarised by the South Viet Nam Committee to Denounce U.S. Puppets' War Crimes in its special communiqué issued on Nov. 24, 1969:

— U.S. troops committed the massacre in Son My village on March 16, 1968.

— The troops involved had been ordered by U.S. authorities to keep mum over the incident; there had been US command orders to wipe out all the village and its inhabitants.

— The villagers had not taken any hostile action, U.S. troops set fire to houses,

rounded up the inhabitants in many groups and killed them with M-16 rifles and M-40 machine guns.

Victims of the massacre were civilians, old people, women and children, many of them sucklings.

U.S. troops did not leave the village until they had killed all the villagers; had been exterminated.

A few victims escaped because they were protected by other bodies on top of them.

THOUGH the GIs who took part in the massacre or witnessed it have substantiated the above-mentioned facts, the Saigon puppet regime and the US administration have been trying hard to play down the story.

The Thieu-Ky-Khem puppet administration claimed it has also ordered an investigation into the Son My case, but 24 hours after the order,

(Continued page 4)

Today, under the socialist regime led by the Viet Nam Workers' Party, those

must also fight for their own defence and for the defence of human dignity and culture.

SON MY MOTHERS CALL FOR VENGEANCE

THE Women's Committee for Liberation of Son My village, Son Tinh district, Quang Ngai province (South Viet Nam), has just denounced the massacre of 502 people, most of them women and children, perpetrated by U.S. troops on March 16.

The unheard-of savagery and magnitude of the massacre were denounced in a letter sent to the P.L.A.F. fighters calling on them to exact vengeance. The letter gave the following details:

"At 6.30 a.m. all around the village eleven or twelve people, mostly women and children, were on their way to work. They were in sight of the people, plus everything."

The inhabitants of the village had been told to run to safety when the G.I.s came and tell them.

Vo Thi Phu, mother of a 12-month-old baby, was shot dead. She had only time to say to Puvi, a 12-year-old girl, "Tell my husband that my services are hidden under the door step and he should take good care of our child." The baby which tried to suck at its mother's breast, died when it found out.

The Young...

May 27 1968 No 166 5th Year den

Little Lien took refuge in a trench with her grand parents. When her grand-ma was killed, she urged her grandpa to move to another shelter but received no

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Mr. XUAN THUY:

THE SON MY CASE IS ONLY ONE OF THE INNUMERABLE CRIMES PERPETRATED BY THE US AGGRESSORS

At the 44th session of the Paris Conference, Minister Xuan Thuy, head of the DRVN Government delegation, criticized the US government's plan for prolongation of the war as can be inferred from Mr. Nixon's November 3 speech and the statements of many personalities in the US administration, as well as recent US practical deeds.

He quoted US Defense Secretary M. Laird as saying on November 20 that the US would phase out US troop withdrawal in many years and even after the withdrawal of US combat troops, "support and training troops" would still remain in South Viet Nam. He also quoted in Packard, US Deputy Defense Secretary, as saying in Saigon on November 21 that the US command in South Viet Nam would give priority to the "pacification" work and the development of the puppet army's military potentialities.

Thus, the DRVN chief negotiator emphasized, the Nixon administration still wants a military solution. It has been carrying out atrocious raids and bombardments against one area after another, perpetrating massacres not less bloody than in Son My and Ia Lang An. This clearly shows that the Nixon administration still cannot bring itself to withdraw all US troops from South Viet Nam, and seeks to prolong the war and the occupation of South Viet Nam by US troops.

Minister Xuan Thuy also condemned the US for stepping up its "special war" in Laos and increasingly violating the territory and sovereignty of the Kingdom of Cambodia. He quoted Head of State Norodom Sihanouk's speech on November 22 and the *Pathet Lao* Radio's statement on the same day energetically protesting against the US and demand

ing it to put an end to its aggressive acts against the Cambodian and Laotian peoples.

After referring to the American people's anti-Viet Nam war demonstrations on October 15 and November 15 and to universal outcries against the Son My wholesale murder, Mr. Xuan Thuy stressed that the Son My case was only one of the innumerable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors in South Viet Nam.

Refuting President Nixon's assertion that should the US troops withdraw from South Viet Nam, it would be a "disaster", Minister Xuan Thuy said:

"It is obvious that US troops, the puppet administration and army, and nobody else, have been savagely slaughtering South Vietnamese during the past 15 years. Should the US troops withdraw, there would be no more such massacres."

ABOUT LODGE AND WALSH'S RESIGNATION

ABOUT Lodge and Lawrence E. Walsh have resigned respectively as chief and deputy-chief of the US delegation at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, effective on December 8. Their resignations have been accepted by the US President.

Announcing this, the Nixon administration tried to produce the impression that it had come as a "surprise" to it. But the *HITC* said it "hardly surprised anyone."

If the four-party conference on Viet Nam has not been able to move an inch so far, that is because of the stubbornness and perversity of the American side which has been persisting in its policy of war intensification and refusal to withdraw quickly and completely US and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and to let the South Viet Nam people settle themselves

their internal affairs. This policy of the US had been consistently followed by Cabot Lodge at the Paris Conference, sometimes with open cynicism. Yet, when tendering their resignations, Lodge and Walsh had the cheek to complain that "the Communists had refused to enter into serious negotiations at the Paris Conference."

On the other hand, in connection with Lodge and Walsh's move, public opinion in the world scored the US side's failure to prove its readiness to talk in good faith in Paris and attempt to "downgrade" the talks. In spite of White House spokesman Ziegler's denial, the *New York Times* on November 21 editorially commented that Lodge's resignation and President Nixon's apparent intention not to name a successor promptly "are disturbing signs that the administration

may be turning away from the Paris talks as a forum for ending the war."

As Le Quang Hiep, adviser to the delegation at the DRVN Conference, pointed out at a press conference on November 20, "the principal question is not a change of persons, but whether or not the US will really change its policy."

Le Quang Hiep said: "The principal question is that: the US must show goodwill and serious attitude: it must stop its aggression, withdraw quickly and completely its troops from South Viet Nam without laying down any condition; it must agree to the formation of a provisional coalition government in South Viet Nam. That is what really matters. Without such seriousness and good-will, nobody, whoever he may be, can solve the problem."

Hanoi Press Opinion

ON SATO'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON

THE Nixon-Sato talks marked a new step of development of the US-Japan aggressive military alliance.

The US and Japanese ruling circles have been drumming about the US promise to "return Okinawa to Japan" as a gesture of "good will" of the US and an "achievement" of the Sato authorities.

This move cannot obscure the essence of the problem highlighted by the explosive political atmosphere in Tokyo and many other big cities of Japan, before Sato's departure to the US.

Nixon's assertion that "peace and progress in the Pacific depended on ever increasing co-operation between Japan and the United States", indicated the US intention to use Japan as the base core and shock force in the realization of its "new policy", i.e. to step up the use of Asians to fight Asians.

As for Sato's claim that "co-operative relations between Tokyo and Washington are assuming ever greater importance for the maintenance of world peace", it only betrays Japan's scheme to take advantage of the US failures and difficulties in Viet Nam and Asia as a whole to improve its status in the "US-Japan alliance" for expansionist purposes.

The return of Okinawa to Japan as arranged by Nixon and Sato will lead to a more dangerous situation for the security of Asia. It will give the US the right to freely the military bases in Japan including the Okinawa nuclear base, and make it possible for the Japanese ruling

circles to further strengthen their military alliance with the US and other satellites of the US in Asia. AP commented on November 20 that the arrangement would permit the US to use Okinawa "as a nuclear springboard in case of extreme crisis in the Western Pacific."

US imperialism and the Japanese monopoly capital have agreed to extend the terms of the US-Japan Security Treaty which constitutes the basis for Japan-US military alliance and which the Japanese ruling circles regard as the "fundamental principle of Japan's national defence policy."

Officially, during their talks the US president and the Japanese premier hardly touched upon the Viet Nam problem. But foreign sources disclosed that Nixon had requested Japan to support actively US "Vietnamization" of the war. The Japanese radio reported on November 2 that Sato had declared his support for President Nixon's present efforts to reach a Viet Nam solution, and would visit many Asian countries and call on them to exert pressure upon the parties directly involved in the war. He is also said to have declared his readiness to participate in an international control organ in Viet Nam and promise to increase aid for the Saigon puppet administration, and so on.

The Vietnamese and Japanese peoples have many times complained the Sato administration for failing after the US in its aggressive war. Two years ago, in his

(Continued page 7)

DRVN FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN DENIES US-CLAIMED "CONTACTS"

THE DRVN Foreign Ministry's spokesman on Nov. 21 issued a statement refuting the US State Department's claim on November 20 that there had been recent "diplomatic contacts" between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam "through other countries."

The spokesman's statement said:

"The above statement of the US State Department was another attempt of the Nixon administration to fool public opinion and dodge compliance with the pressing demand of the peoples in the US and the world for a speedy, total and unconditional withdrawal of US troops from South Viet Nam."

UNDER French rule, there was no film studio in our country. Some colonialists invested in film screening enterprises showing films hired from France, the US and other capitalist countries. A few firms also produced cheap feature films, newscasts or documentary films commissioned by the colonial administration.

Vietnamese capitalists had shares in such ventures but an even more limited role. Those among them who wanted to make progressive films were prevented from doing so by the colonial authorities. The predatory French capitalists were reluctant to risk big sums of money. Given the total scanty capacity of their theatres, all Vietnamese went to the pictures each could only do so once every ten years.

The founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on Sept. 2, 1945 was recorded in the documentary *Independence Day*. With other films shot by fellow countrymen in France on the activities of the DRVN National Assembly Delegation in France and the DRVN Government Delegation in Fontainebleau, that first newscast has gone down in the history of Vietnamese cinema as the harbinger of the birth of cinematography in Viet Nam.

In 1948, in the stirring atmosphere of the nation-wide resistance against the enemy, and for the needs of the fighting, some professional cameramen created for themselves facilities for taking moving pictures and managed to shoot glimpses of the front and in the daily life of the people and armed forces in Nam Bo in the early stage of national effort. *The Meo Hoa Battle*, *The Viet Nam Campaign*, *Eight Cat Campaign*, *Printing in the Resistance*, *The Viet Nam Workers' Party* and *President Ho Chi Minh's 70th Birthday*, *History Songs*, *With the Colours*, *Revolute to Win*, *Glimpses of President Ho Chi Minh's 70th Birthday*.

On August 5, 1954, the US imperialists unleashed their air war of destruction against North Viet Nam. The *Quang Binh Victory* and *US Air Pirates Daily Punished* reflected in time the exploits achieved by our people and armed forces right from the beginning of US crimes.

Throughout the four years' fighting against air raids, there were hundreds of newscasts and documentaries highlighting the revolutionary heroism of the Vietnamese people and their armed force; most representative among them were *On Billow Crest*, *Pioneers*, *Ham Bang Fighters*, *Nguyen Van Tron*, *Your Memory Will Never Die*, *Zero In on the Enemy*.

The Vietnamese cinema started from newscasts and documentary films. This characteristic was the product of particular circumstances in our country and our people's combat needs. This news character, one of the great qualities of our cinema, can be found in our feature films even since their inception. *The Same River Waters Our Shores*, the first Vietnamese feature film, was screened on the occasion of the anniversary of our resistance for national reunification—July 20, 1959—and dealt with a subject relating to that struggle.

With the 1954 Geneva agreements, the Vietnamese Revolution entered a new period. Our cameramen returning from the battlefield buckled down to filming new screening enterprises showing films hired from France, the US and other capitalist countries. A few firms also produced cheap feature films, newscasts or documentary films commissioned by the colonial administration.

While formerly, our newscasts and documentaries were able to reflect the important historic events in our war of resistance against French colonialism, today in socialist revolution, our documentary film makers display great militancy and sharp political acumen by shooting the pictures and men with a full life and not only general but also typical characters.

One of their achievements, *The Hoi-Hung-Hai Irrigation System*, was quite an epic of collective work of people struggling for the reconstruction line of the Viet Nam Workers' Party. It was the first Vietnamese film to win the highest prize

Since then, ten years have elapsed, and over thirty feature films have been produced, nearly all of which were linked with the resistance war against French colonialism and US imperialism or with socialist construction. *The Young Fighter* tells of the exploits of Cu Thu Lan, a hero who, in the Hoa Binh battle, jumped on French tanks to wipe them out. *Little Kim Dong* pictures the little room in which one had to work for hours running; to maintain a temperature required by film processing, the ice should also be brought from enemy-controlled towns. When an enemy raid took place, the "studio" must be evacuated on small craft to the Plain of Reeds or the U Minh jungle where work was continued.

In North Viet Nam, after the Frontier Campaign, we received aid from the Soviet Union, People's China and other friendly countries. But we had to rely mainly on our

own means. The "studios" were housed in bamboo huts deep in jungle, some "apparatuses" such as a sound recorder for 16mm films were made of tin cans, empty tins, discarded lenses and magnets. The "gadgets" are now still useful in South Viet Nam liberated areas.

Thus the ordinary life described and all problems dealt with in our feature films are all burning topics of the day.

Despite many difficulties encountered in the last ten years, we have been able to make animated cartoons, puppet films, and paper cuttings for children. It is worth noticing that far from being satisfied with true formalism, the producers of that kind of films draw their themes from daily life and devote their efforts to materializing the ideological content of "Uncle Ho's Five Recommendations" and revolutionary heroism. Initial success was recorded in *Fighting Hornets*, *France on the Mountain Slope*, *The Blackbird Which Speaks the Language of Men*, *We Want to Build*.

Mention should be made at last of our scientific and educational films which, though still in small number and dealing with limited subjects only, are most helpful to technical revolution and the popularization of science and technology among the people.

At present, the Vietnamese cinema, though still having scanty resources, is possessed of some material and technical foundation. One can hardly have an idea of the difficulties it encountered in its heroic days. At that time, in the resistance zone of Nam Bo (South Viet Nam) films and cameras had to be bought from enemy-occupied areas. Big jobs served as back rooms in which one had to work for hours running; to maintain a temperature required by film processing, the ice should also be brought from enemy-controlled towns. When an enemy raid took place, the "studio" must be evacuated on small craft to the Plain of Reeds or the U Minh jungle where work was continued.

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All our difficulties are not yet overcome, but we are now able to turn out production apparatuses and generators of international standards, and most of the parts of a camera.

We devote our efforts to establishing a Vietnamese cinema having a revolutionary, national, scientific and modern character.

While before the nation-wide Resistance War (Dec. 19, 1946), we had only one mobile projection team active in the provinces lying between Hanoi and Phu Yen with apparatuses to screen the 16mm films on the activities of the DRVN National Assembly Delegation in France and the Government's Delegation in Fontainebleau, we have now 10 teams operating all over North Viet Nam. With a very handy luggage carried on bicycles or mostly pick-a-back, the members of these teams circulate the country from the

lowlands to the uplands, from the seacoast to the borderland to entertain the people and to entertain the people. Thus even the minority nationalities in the remotest parts of the country see these films. Fishermen attend film shows on their own craft.

During the four years of (Continued page 7)



A shot from the film
Toward the Fire Line

A Horrible Crime

(Continued from page 1)

the Saigon Defence Ministry on Nov. 22 published a communiqué, shamelessly contending that reports and photographs from Western news agencies were "completely inaccurate." IFP sarcastically commented, "This means investigators had to go to Quang Ngai province, carry out their inquiry and return to Saigon to prepare a report, all in a record time." While their top dogs were telling such lies, Ton Thoi Khien, puppet chief of Quang Ngai province, admitted that last year the inhabitants of a hamlet, a US infantry unit for having deliberately killed 60 civilians in Truong An village, Son My area.

For their part, US rulers at first made vague statements, saying they would make no further comment. They did not have "sufficient information," while Bomber and Abrams even had the cheek to state that "the US government does not condone atrocities." Grim facts, however, have given them the lie. On Nov. 21, the US Army Department acknowledged that Lieutenant William Aley alone had murdered 100 South Vietnamese at Son My in March last year. Washington has planned to take legal action against him. By so doing it intends to make a mockery of a law-making officer, giving the Son My affair as an individual act of his. Unsurprisingly, there is ample evidence that Aley and his colleagues had slaughtered people on order. The Chicago Sun-Tribune reported on Nov. 21, Charles A. West, 23, who was then a sergeant and who took part in the Son My mass murder, as saying that the order to carry it out had come from the division level.

UNDER fire at home and abroad, on Nov. 20, Nixon made public a White House statement on the Son My wholesale murder. He hypocritically condemned "alleged" massacre of a number of South Vietnamese civilians by a US army officer, regarding the strict rules of military justice. On the other hand, the statement said, this incident had occurred before Nixon took office and that the present Defence Secretary had known nothing about it.

Nixon is attempting to shirk off his responsibility, but to no avail. Everybody still remembers that in early April this year, Nixon, as the new White House boss, declared, "I have not ordered and do not intend to order a reduction in our activities" (New York Times, April 13, 1969). He and his Defence Secretary Melvin Laird have been carrying on Johnson's old policy of "exerting maximum

military pressure" and inevitably, such a policy leads to Son My-type horrors. As pointed out by the DRVN Foreign Ministry in its Nov. 20 statement, "the massacre of Son My was but one of the innumerable abominable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam."

H. Nixon wants to have ample evidence of the crimes committed by the US and its stooges in South Viet Nam since he came into power, there will be no difficulty in getting it. Public opinion had recently raised an outcry and voiced indignation over the "Green Berets" affair which the Nixon administration had tried to whitewash with a drawn-out investigation designed to minimise its involvement. The brutal treatment and torturing of 1,400 female political prisoners at Thu Duc jail and the murder of a number of them are further proofs. The report from the "US Study Team on Religious and Political Freedom in Viet Nam" has thrown some light on this case and on many other crimes being committed in South Viet Nam under the umbrella protection of Nixon's ambassador and generals. The Kong H'ing, its Lang Au, Hong Nam, affairs can also be mentioned if Nixon so desires.

TWO years ago, after the Stockholm judgment in Sweden, May 1967, on the crime of aggression committed by the US against the Viet Nam people, the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal in its second session in Roskilde (Denmark) condemned the US imperialist aggressors for having, in defiance of all laws on warfare, used and experimented in Viet Nam prohibited weapons against civilians, for having committed the crime against humanity and the crime of genocide against the Viet Nam people.

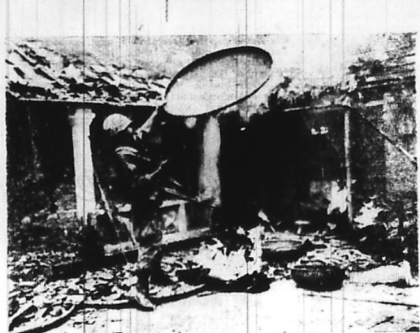
However, during the past years, disregarding public opinion in the world and in America itself, the US ruling circles before and the Nixon government at present, after to months in power, have been stepping up and prolonging the criminal war of aggression in Viet Nam.

ALL NIXON'S PLOTS ARE SIMPLY AIMED AT PROLONGING THE WAR. AS generally known, in early April this year, Nixon declared, "I have not ordered and do not intend to order a reduction in our activities" (New York Times, April 13, 1969). He and his Defence Secretary Melvin Laird have been carrying on Johnson's old policy of "exerting maximum

Two Years after the Second Session of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal (Nov. 20, 1967)

THE DOSSIER OF US WAR CRIMES CROWS EVER THICKER

EDITOR'S NOTE — We reprint below, in a slightly abridged form and with sub-headings by us, a statement of the Commission for Investigation of the US Imperialist War Crimes in Viet Nam on the occasion of the second anniversary of the second session of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal.



GI's of First Air Mobile Division setting fire to dwelling houses near Tan Ky (Quang Nam province) in October 1967.

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However, during the past years, disregarding public opinion in the world and in America itself, the US ruling circles before and the Nixon government at present, after to months in power, have been stepping up and prolonging the criminal war of aggression in Viet Nam.

At the Paris peace talks, the Nixon government, in which we can negotiate from strength. More than a month after, on May 23, 1969, US Defence Secretary Melvin Laird, in an interview with an IFP correspondent, stated: "It has always been our goal to keep the maximum pressure on the enemy."

Nixon's November 1 speech about the Vietnam problem once more revealed the utterly odious position of the US government with regard to the Viet Nam problem. From his address it is clear that the US President would pursue his "search for peace... through continued implementation of this plan for Vietnamization" of the war and would not order "the complete withdrawal of all US ground forces" until their replacement by South Vietnamese forces "become feasible." He plainly declared, without beating about the bush that "this withdrawal will be made in stages... with conditions generally known as absolutely unacceptable. This stubborn attitude caused Mrs. Chisholm to indignantly voice her censure before the House on October 14, 1969. As she made it out, the American people are tightly fastened to this war by elaborate and presumptuous leaders who do not avow their faults. The war the US is waging, she affirmed, is not a just war. The troop cutback is mere token. Vietnamization is a swindle. And all the plots are simply aimed at prolonging the war, she added (Congressional Record - October 14).

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(To be continued)

THE Women's Committee for Liberation of Son My village, Son Tinh district, Quang Ngai province (South Viet Nam), has just denounced the massacre of 502 people, most of them women and children, perpetrated by US troops on March 16.

The unheard-of savagery and magnitude of the massacre were denounced in a letter sent to the PLAF fighters calling on them to exact vengeance. The letter gave the following details:

"At 6.30 a.m. on March 16, 1968, all the enemy batteries installed around Son My started pounding the village for more than half an hour. The eleven choppers came in, strafing the locality and landing American troops whose sanguinary intention was visible on their faces. They shot at all that came in sight: men, women, children, elderly people, plants and animals and destroyed everything: crops, fruit-trees, houses..."

"The inhabitants who were going about their work,

Mrs Mot sitting on the edge of a shelter, and called to her: the old woman had received a bullet in the forehead and had died. Little Lien also found the inert body of Mrs Mink, her head lolling against the shelter wall, her eyes staring. She ran towards Mrs Ngau: that pregnant woman died after she had been raped by the GIs. Her four children were also killed on the edge of their shelter. Then Lien rushed to Mrs To Thi Mai who had just had her baby; she was dead, and her child in an agitated state by her.

"Lien rushed from place to place, shouting at the top of her voice, but got no reply; she only saw dead bodies and burning huts. Never will she forget such horrible scenes on their faces. They shot at all that came in sight: men, women, children, elderly people, plants and animals and destroyed everything: crops, fruit-trees, houses..."

"After raping to death Mrs Son, a 15-year-old girl, aggressors made a deep slash in her body with a bayonet. Mrs Lien who hid in a

SON MY MOTHERS CALL FOR VENGEANCE

(Reprinted from Viet Nam Courier No 166, May 27, 1968)

setting off for market or for fishing, had hardly time to run to safety when the GIs came and fell on them."

"To Thi Phu, mother of a 12-month-old baby, was shot dead. She had only time to say to Tuyn, a 12-year-old girl, 'Tell my husband that my savings are hidden under the door step and he should take good care of our child.' The baby which tried to suck at its mother's breast, died when it found only blood instead of milk. The Yankees got angry and shouted 'Viet Cong, Viet Cong' and hooped straws on mother and baby and set fire to it."

"Other GIs pulled Mui and Mot out of their trench, beat them, then threw them the same trench and blew it up with a mine; the two women and four children of theirs are killed."

"In another shelter, Mrs Truong and child were found dead, their bodies cut into halves and horribly maimed by a mine explosion. One, a 12-year-old girl, was killed at the entrance of the shelter."

"Little Lien took refuge in a trench with her grandparents. When her grand-uncle was killed, she urged her grand-uncle to move to another shelter but received no answer. He was also dead. Pounded, stricken, she ran to Mrs Mot and Mrs Thi, two old women, but found them killed together with eight other people."

"In another house, she saw

cubboard was brought out and killed. Her body was found 4 days later."

"Mui, 14, was raped and shot in her hut. The GIs set fire to it, guarded the door and pushed back the poor little girl who tried to run from the fire."

"Phung Thi Ly, a young mother of four, received a burst of machine-gun shots. She said to her mother, 'I'm going to die. Take care of my two children who are in the shelter.' Muttering her strength, she shouted, 'Don't let US imperialism!' before breathing her last, lying on her back, first closed and hanging two of her children who died of wounds on their breasts."

"Worse still, the aggressors then overhauled women and children had many dozen old people into a canal dug in front of Mr Nhon's house and murdered them with machine-gun fire and hand grenades. The victims' corpses were disgorged beyond the entrance of a common grave had subsequently to be dug by the survivors for them all."

The letter concluded:

"In one day only, 502 people including over 170 children are massacred, 300 houses destroyed and over 500 head of cattle killed."

"Our coastal village is given with coconut palms, banana and willows is now but heaps of ashes."

SON MY SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT

HERE are some excerpts from a letter signed by Phan Thyo, 60, Mue Phan Thi Tho, 35, Miss Nguyen Thi Hoa, 18, Phan Thi Mai, a 15-year-old girl, of Khe Thuan hamlet, Son My village, survivors of the Son My massacre and released by Gial Phong Press Agency in May 1968:

"The time: 6 a.m., the day, March 16, 1968."

"The people in our village were preparing for a busy day. Suddenly, US artillery from the Ram Mount, the Binh Lien position and the Quang Ngai military sector pounded the village with violence. After this, dozens of US helicopters heavily loaded with GIs arrived. The GIs got out of the helicopters and divided themselves into three groups respectively for three jobs: to burn houses and destroy people's property; to arrest the inhabitants; and to cut down trees, destroy orchards and kill the cattle..."

"The GIs attacked one house after another, one shelter after another, with tear grenades, dynamite and gun fire, killing many people inside. Other people were marched off. Some were shot dead just while the column was moving. The others were herded on the bank of a canal. Over 200 people, mostly aged people, women and children were cut down with

machine-gun, or mortar fire. The victims fell down one upon another. The few of us survived the massacre, because we were protected by the corpses above us."

"We were also eye-witness of other crimes. Mr Truong Tho, 72 years old, was savagely beaten up. He never with his head was knocked off. He afterwards was thrown into a well, and finished with grenades and sub-machinegun fire. Little To Thi Nguyet, 12 years old, was raped and bayoneted to death. Phan Thi Mai, 13 years old, was raped and locked up in a barn which was set on fire."

"Within one hour, US troops slaughtered 380 people in Khe Thuan hamlet including 67 aged people and 170 children from one to 15 years of age. The rest were women, two of them far on in their time."

"12 families were exterminated. All the members of Mr Le Ly's family including four children, the youngest barely 4 years old, were massacred. In one case, the raiders killed a whole family save a baby. The US troops also burned hundreds of houses, and moved down hundreds of cattle..."

"During the massacre, 87 people in our hamlet were killed, 9 others wounded. Among the dead were 6 old people, 33 children from 1 to 15 years of age and one expectant mother. The enemy also burned hundreds of houses, and many fishing boats."

A NOTHER letter also released by Gial Phong Press Agency said



US First Air Mobile Division men using poison gases in a "sweep" at Que Son (Quang Nam province)

Do Da, one of the survivors of the Son My massacre, showing his forehead-wounding hand.

25th Anniversary of the Liberation of Albania (Nov. 29, 1969)

WARM GREETINGS
TO THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE

THE Vietnamese people have observed with due solemnity the 25th anniversary of the liberation of the People's Republic of Albania (Nov. 29, 1969).

(In Nov. 28, 1969, Thang, President of the DRVN, Le Duon, First Secretary of the C.C. of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Truong Chinh, President of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, and Pham Van Dong, Prime Minister, sent to the Albanian People's Republic a warm congratulatory message.)

On Nov. 27, in the evening, the C.C. of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the DRVN Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries held in Hanoi an impressive commemorative ceremony to mark this historic day of the brother Albanian people. Vice Premier Nguyen Van Truong, member of the Politburo of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and DRVN Foreign Minister, delivered the opening speech in which he praised in glowing terms the great achievements recorded by the Albanian people in socialist construction and national defence.

Then Nguyen Khanh Toan, alternate member of the C.C. of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Chairman of the State Board of Social Sciences,

DRVN GOVERNMENT
Flays US Bombing of
Cambodian Territory

The DRVN Government issued on Nov. 25 the following statement condemning the US imperialists' recent bombing of Cambodian territory:

ON Nov. 16 and 17, 1969, US planes, including B-52s and artillery, many times bombarded border posts, Bakdam townlet, Huochek village and Semnorum route in Mondulkiri province, inflicting many casualties including Khmer officers, soldiers and civilians, and heavy damage on military equipment and buildings. With particular intransigence US planes even strafed Cambodian ambulances, preventing the evacuation of the victims.

In a strong protest, Samdech Head of State Norodom Ranariddh pointed out that those unprecedented aggressive acts of American armed forces against Cambodia brought out the hypocrisy

of the US administration's professions of peace made at a time when US forces savagely attacked a country whose only crime was refusal to submit to US domination.

The Vietnamese people and the DRVN Government are deeply shocked at the losses of life and property caused by the US to the Khmer people, and reaffirm once again their full solidarity with the fraternal Khmer people in the struggle against the common enemy — the US imperialist aggressors.

The Vietnamese people and the DRVN Government severely condemn the criminal aggressive acts of the US against the Kingdom of Cambodia. The DRVN Government fully supports the just position and legitimate demand of the Kingdom of Cambodia as expounded in the note of November 10, 1969, of the Cambodian

Foreign Ministry to the US Government. The US must stop forthwith all its criminal acts against the Kingdom of Cambodia, and strictly respect the independence, sovereignty, peace, neutrality and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The Vietnamese people are convinced that the Indo-Chinese peoples, the Governments and people of the peace and justice-loving countries, and the DRVN Government will warmly respond to the pressing appeal of November 22, 1969, of Samdech Head of State Norodom Ranariddh, and will resolutely demand that the US stop its extermination war against the Indo-Chinese peoples including the Khmer people.

Under the clearheaded leadership of Samdech Head of State Norodom Ranariddh, the just struggle of the Khmer people will surely be crowned with glorious victory.

The "Furtive War" in Laos

THE US has been conducting a "furtive war" in Laos. As its scope is expanding day by day, its consequences are becoming increasingly apparent. US intervention, then aggression, in Laos which began many years ago, has escalated in brutality in proportion to US failures in South Viet Nam. The US has been interfering in Laos and also in Thailand with a view to building a strategic defence line along the Mekong river, for the defence of US imperialist interests in South-East Asia.

US activity in Laos has caused justified concern among public opinion right in the United States. This has been borne out by the recent congressional debates on Laos.

A "NEW VIET NAM" IN THE MAKING

A CORRESPONDENT of Time magazine in Laos has noted that the US is only too keen to Vietnamese to sense immediately Amer-

ican intervention in Laos. The telephone directory of the US Embassy is as thick as that of the whole of Laos. On a per capita basis, US aid to Laos has been bigger than to any other country with over 250 million dollars per year for a country with less than 10 million population. The military staff of the US Embassy numbers only 70, but an extensive network of US military "advisers" and personnel is blanketing all the military and military equipment of the Vietnamese administration, totalling 12,000 men (ten times the size of the Harkins Command that directed the "special war" in South Viet Nam formerly, American military advisers and personnel are taking charge of the officing, training, equipping and transportation of the entire military force known as "Royal Army" (rightist army) in Laos. US tactical advisers are assigned down to battalion level in this army.

Apart from assisting the US aircraft have been sent to Laos, has also been supporting a force of pirates recruited from among the Meo ethnic group headed by a general of the Vietnamese army named Vang Pao and has made of it a "special force" which the US has called "clandestine army" and on which it counts as a key strategic force to oppose Laos' revolution. The US "Agency for International Development" (AID) on Laos is being used primarily to transport food and military equipment to this "clandestine army". Two chartered air companies (Air America and Continental Air Service—staffed by nearly 200 American civilians) in addition to much larger number of Laotians, Thais and Filipinos under the control of the CIA, are also made available exclusively to cater for all the needs of the so-called "clandestine army".

US tactical support to the same "army". General Vang Pao has not been stung in praise: "More than any one else, not excluding the Prime Minister (Phouma), Vang Pao is the hope of the US, the only man capable of leading the military and political situation in Laos" (Inter-

national Herald Tribune—October 27, 1969). Spoiled by their US masters, the Meo landlards have behaved much more and more arrogantly and have become blood-thirsty bands of robbers with a long record of crimes. They are given carte blanche to "burn all and kill all" the US "Agency for International Development" (AID) on Laos is being used primarily to transport food and military equipment to this "clandestine army".

The territory of Thailand has been utilized by the US network of aggression against Laos. Apart from six major military complexes in Thailand which it has been using as take-off bases for air raids on Laos, the US has also built a system of strategic roads linking Thailand to Laos, with the specific aim of transporting US arms and war materials to Laos. The presence of Thai combat troops in Laos is no longer a secret. At present, about 5,000 Thai troops are together with the Vietnamese army conducting illegal encircling attacks against the liberated zone of Laos, on US orders.

Since 1964, thousands of US aircraft have been openly bombing and strafing areas under the control of the

(Continued page 7)

THE "FURTIVE WAR"...

(Continued from page 6)

the US assumed the role of planner and commander of each operation. Two chemical sprays on areas in Muong Phin, Phou Bent and Phou Xe (October 9, 1969) against the civilian population and crops were also directly commanded by the US.

Meanwhile, the Vietnamese administration headed by Mr. Phouma is growing increasingly dependent on the US. It is living on US dollars and is placed under the absolute control of the US in all domains. It has totally become an instrument for US neo-colonialism in Laos.

The area under the control of the Vietnamese administration is nothing less than a US neocolony. People have got weary of the same calumnies and verbal attacks uttered by Mr. Phouma and his associates in connection with the US propaganda machine against the Laotian Patriotic Front, the Alliance of the Laotian Patriotic Front and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Public opinion has also got angry at the continued encirclement of the Representation of the L.P.F. in the Vietnamese and the open provocations against it as well as the unwarranted mass arrests of staff members of the DRVN Embassy in Laos in August 1969. The "White Book" which Mr. Phouma published abroad to justify the US imperialists' aggressive policy and which advances the ridiculous contention that the stepped-up activity of the US in Laos was designed to "defend the Laotian population" has only added a new stain to the already controversial reputation of Mr. Phouma.

He has been taking great pains to prove that "there is no US soldiers on Laotian territory" (AP, October 22, 1969). Meanwhile, US senator Symington and his cohorts have declared that to deny that Americans are fighting and dying in Laos is just a subordination of the truth (AP, October 20, 1969).

INTOLERABLE US INTERVENTION

N Laos as well as in Viet Nam, the higher the US imperialists escalate the war and the more crimes they perpetrate, the stronger the reaction they incur from progressive public opinion in the world. The governments of

many socialist countries and other countries and the press in many parts of the world have made it clear that the present tension in Laos has been caused by the United States. Many US senators have expressed their disapproval of the Nixon administration that it might have sown the seeds for another Viet Nam in South-East Asia and US involvement in Laos has reached alarming proportions.

On October 30, 1969, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko of the Soviet Union, a co-chairman of the 1962 Geneva Conference on Laos, said in a statement: "The Soviet Union, a co-chairman of the 1962 Geneva Conference on Laos, expresses deep concern over the alarming situation in Laos engendered by the ever expanding US intervention in the internal affairs of Laos in connection with the participation of US armed forces in the fighting on Laotian territory... The expansion of the war in Laos along with continued US armed intervention in South Viet Nam has further strained the situation and put more obstacles on the path to a political solution to the Viet Nam problem and the restoration of peace in the Indochinese peninsula. Such behaviour of the US is not only unrealistic; it is also dangerous."

SO LONG AS US AGGRESSION CONTINUES, THE LAOTIAN PEOPLE WILL FIGHT

AS a people cherishing peace and neutrality, the Laotian people must not be deceived by a peace and neutrality in independence and freedom, and must not be misled by the US imperialists. In order to defend our right to live and our existence as human beings, we Laotians, endowed with a traditional indomitable spirit, are resolved to stand up and resist the US aggressors to save the country. The L.P.F. pronouncement made public on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos has instilled strong resolve in every Laotian patriot. If the US imperialists recklessly expand their aggressive war in Laos, there will be no better failures in store for them.

Under the clearheaded leadership of the L.P.F. head-

ed by Prince Souphanouvong with the sympathy and support from the socialist countries and the whole progressive world, the Laotian people have been dealing stunning blows at the aggressors and winning ever more substantial successes. From November 1968 to September 1969 alone, the patriotic Laotian forces in South-East Asia and US involvement in Laos has reached alarming proportions. US planes, bringing the total of US planes lost in Laos since May 1964 to 1,170. They have liberated hundreds of thousands of people from the enemy's grip, adding glorious pages to national history with remarkable feats in Pathi (January 1969), Nam Khang (March 1969), Xieng Khoang (May 1969), Muong Sai (June 1969), Tai Lat (July 1969). At the Plain of Jars and Khaoi Khay, the enemy came under heavy fire, often five or six times per day. On one occasion, a squad of the Laotian People's Liberation Army put to rout an adverse straggled enemy battle, October 12, 1969. At the Western Plain of Jars battlefields, more than 100 enemy troops have been wiped out, including some units of the banlieu chieftain Vang Pao completely knocked out or heavily decimated, which accordingly had to pull back to the rear to nurse their wounds.

The Laotian question is in essence one of intervention and aggression. If a correct solution to it is to be reached, the US government must end its war of aggression against Laos, and scrupulously respect and implement the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos and let Laotian affairs be settled by Laotians among themselves, on the basis of the Geneva Agreement on Laos and the reality of the Laotian situation. First and foremost, the US and its puppets must put an immediate halt to the aerial bombardments and the ground attacks by mercenary troops against the liberated zone of the patriotic forces under the control of the Laotian Patriotic Front.

That is the only way to restore peace in Laos. It is also the way for the US to avoid another failure like that it has experienced in Viet Nam.

On Sato's Trip to Washington

(Continued from page 2)

trip to the USA in November 1967, Sato openly supported the US Viet Nam policy. The Japanese administration has offered Japan as a logistical and operational base for the US aggressive war in Viet Nam. It is to be stressed that while paying lip service to the Okinawa issue, the US and Japan actually continue to slight the de-

mands of the Japanese people and world public opinion, and to use Okinawa as a base of first importance for the aggressive war against Viet Nam. The present attitude of the Sato administration is obviously in one of complicity in the US military occupation of South Viet Nam, maintain the stooge puppet administration with a view to achieving the

partition of Viet Nam. **Nhan Dan (The People)** Nov. 22, 1969

TO THE READER: We are aware that there is much room for improvement in the wording of our paper. We apologise for any shortcomings and highly appreciate all your suggestions as they will help us to work more efficiently in future.

DRVN GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES

THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE DR OF SOMALI

DRVN Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh sent on Nov. 21 a message to the Chairman of the DRVN Minister of the Democratic Republic of

Somali, informing him of the DRVN Government's recognition of the government of the Democratic Republic of Somali.

D.R.V.N.

Foreign Ministry...

(Continued from page 1)

be stopped and the US and satellite troops must be totally withdrawn from South Viet Nam.

ON Nov. 24, 1969 the spokesman of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RST-N also made public a statement on the US massacre and called on the peace and justice-loving countries, democratic international organisations and the world's peoples, including the American people, "to strongly condemn the US aggressors and take effective measures to check their criminal hands."

THE VIETNAMESE CINEMA...

(Continued from page 3)

resistance to the US war of destruction, we could give 446,000 performances (whether in the houses, underground shelters or in the jungle) for an attendance totalling 253.5 million. In the first six months of this year, the aggregate number was 41 million. Thus in North Viet Nam, each inhabitant goes to the cinema 5 times a year on an average.

The Vietnamese public do not content themselves with film shows; they also discuss films to draw lessons from them and suggest to the producers.

In South Viet Nam, our film workers displayed great activity right from the beginning of the last resistance war (against the French colonialists). In the present struggle against the American aggressors, they are showing an even greater patriotism and revolutionary spirit. Many South Vietnamese film makers have received the titles "Valiant anti-US Fighters" or "Valiant US Armoured Vehicle Fighters". Many documentaries have been shot at the cost of their lives.

The Viet Nam Workers' Party line on literature and arts and the solicitation of President Ho Chi Minh in his lifetime and of the Party Central Committee for the branch have contributed to the maturity and combativeness of the Vietnamese cinema, so full of youth and life.

The films made by Liberation Army workers have exerted a considerable effect on film fans all over the country (PLAF fighters and civilians alike) as they greatly stimulate them in the resistance against the aggressors and their lackeys.

The films made by Liberation Army workers have exerted a considerable effect on film fans all over the country (PLAF fighters and civilians alike) as they greatly stimulate them in the resistance against the aggressors and their lackeys.

They depict characters of great heroism, of great optimism but also of great modesty and hence carry great conviction with foreign spectators, those who stand the supreme struggle against the American imperialists.

It was therefore not an accident that at the two huge festivals in Moscow, Ca Chi Guerrillas and Toward the Fire Line were awarded the highest prizes.

THE Viet Nam Workers' Party line on literature and arts and the solicitation of President Ho Chi Minh in his lifetime and of the Party Central Committee for the branch have contributed to the maturity and combativeness of the Vietnamese cinema, so full of youth and life.



Guerrillas of the Ho Chi (Lang An) province have downed a chopper with ten bullets.

Military Operations

- 3,280 Enemy Casualties in Bu Prang—Duc Lap Sector, Northeast of Saigon in 25 Days.
- 500 Adverse Troops Wiped Out in a Week around Bu Dop.
- In a Small Sector of My Tho Province, Mekong Delta, 620 Puppet Soldiers Knocked Out in 4 Days.

SINCE the third week of November, the PLAF have achieved important successes on the front Northeast and Southwest of Saigon. *Guo Phung Press Agency* reported.

NORTHEAST OF SAIGON

PLAF presents on grassland around "Special Forces" camp at Bu Prang, 125 km north-northeast of Saigon. From Nov. 17 to 19, PLAF artillery pounded the camp five times, setting on fire a fuel depot, 15 barracks, disabling 50 adverse troops and downing 4 choppers.

On Nov. 20, southwest of Bu Prang, Battalion 2, puppet Regiment 47, hard hit, lost 120 men. From Nov. 21 to 23, two battalions of puppet Regiment 53 suffered 100 casualties and had 5 heavy guns and mortars destroyed and 17 helicopters downed in 4 days.

Meanwhile, the PLAF hammered at the enemy in Duc Lap region, 37 km northeast of Bu Prang. In total, in the Bu Prang—Duc Lap sector, between October 28 and November 21, PLAF men put out of action 4,250 enemy men, wiped out or badly mangled a battalion group, 3 regimental CPs and 5 battalions, wrecked 80 military trucks and 25 guns and mortars, downed 30 planes and helicopters, and seized 200 firearms including 90 mm and 155 mm cannons. Fighting is going on.

10 km southwest of Bu Prang, the puppet forces were very active in Bu Dop region, 120 km north-northeast of Saigon. From Nov. 14 to 20, they inflicted 500 casualties on the enemy, chiefly on the CPs of the First Cav., destroyed 4 military vehicles, mostly armored cars, and grounded 6 choppers.

At Cam Xe, 68 km north-northeast of Saigon, 9 choppers were downed and a toll of 50 enemy troops was exacted in two engagements on Nov. 16 and 18.

SOUTHWEST OF SAIGON

ON the left bank of the Mekong, the PLAF launched from Nov. 17 to 20 violent attacks in My Tho province. Cai Lay and Cai Be subsector (150 km and 88 km southwest of Saigon) and the military posts along Highway No. 4 (Saigon to the Mekong Delta) were bombarded, 210 adverse soldiers, 10 military vehicles and 4 heavy guns put out of action. On Nov. 18, 3 battalions of puppet Infantry Division 7 and regional forces badly battered near Cai Lay sustained the loss of one battalion of regular troops, 100 dead and 100 firearms and 50 men taken prisoner.

OTHER SECTORS

In the Western Ho Pleiku, on Nov. 16, 18 and 20, many motorized columns, intercepted on Road No. 19 between Pleiku and An Khê, had 45 vehicles and 100 adverse soldiers wiped out and a chopper downed.

North of the High Plateau, the CP of puppet Regiment 42 at Tan Canh, 39 km north-northeast of Kontum was bombarded ten times between Nov. 21 and 24, and an encampment of US Infantry Division 4, 30 km northwest of Pleiku, stormed: 14 military vehicles and 4 heavy guns knocked out of action.

Western agencies reported that between Nov. 23 and 27 the PLAF remained very active and inflicted heavy punishment on the US and puppet troops:

Shelling Bien Hoa air base, and 5 US artillery positions near Bu Dop and Bu Prang camp (morning of Nov. 25) and Duc Lap subsector CP (Nov. 27).

Ground assaults on elements of US Infantry Division 4 near Pleiku (Nov. 23 and 24) on an armored column of 300 vehicles of the First Cav. near Song Be and on a battalion of puppet Infantry Division 18 near Xuan Loc on Nov. 22. The latter unit was whittled down while enemy aircraft coming to rescue it mistakenly hit at the survivors, who took 31 casualties including a battalion commander and American advisors.

Staging two coups de main on a unit of US Armored Regiment 11 in Tay Ninh province on Nov. 26, destroying many dozen vehicles including Sherman tanks, and fully loaded trucks and causing serious losses to the enemy.

A FIGHTER'S RECOLLECTION

HO CHI MINH, Your Name Inspires Them with Awe!

WE fell into the hands of the enemy. They used most atrocious kinds of torture to bring us to our knees. They ordered us to salute the "three-stripe" flag (1). As we said "no" with a grin, they pointed upon us, gave us a good hiding and penned us up in a dark cell without giving us any food nor allowing us to write.

All of us, some dozen women, shared a small room filled with an offensive stench and received a sound beating every few hours. Suddenly a shrill voice rose among us:

"Ho Chi Minh, you appear like a twinkling star and relieve the people's sufferings!" (2)

The song was taken up by other women and spread to nearby wards. There, it was sung by men and interspersed with "Dawn with terror!" "Dawn with repression of women!" shouts.

The more we sang, the more the image of Uncle Ho became vivid in our minds as if he were there witnessing our facing up to the enemy. The song gave us additional strength. Though manhandled and with arms and teeth broken and discolored hair caked with blood, we stood the trial stoically, while our torturers were frenziedly harping insults at and swooping on us to beat us roaring like hounds. Firm as blocks of steel, we went on chanting:

"Long live Ho Chi Minh, Liberator of the people!"

These words instilled in us more confidence and we looked straight in their faces, scowling each line with pride. Our torturers' heads reared and snatched as soon as they reached the door of the cell.

A short pudgy officer threatened us: "I'll make you sing tomorrow, if you don't, you'll starve."

The next morning, they came and drove us out in the courtyard. Standing astride

near a flag pole, the officer shouted: "Sing in praise of President Ngo!" (3)

Silence. He repeated his words and signalled in with a weak other things with clubs. All of a sudden, Sister Muoi broke off the ranks and came up to him. She rolled up her left sleeve, letting bare three words: "Ho Chi Minh" tattooed on her arm.

A Vietnamese woman never goes in for tattooing, but Sister Muoi had spent many moons marking her arm in order, she said, "to keep Uncle Ho near me in lieu of his picture."

The officer growled, astonished by such boldness. In a low but firm voice she gave a clear-cut reply: "We don't know how to sing it."

"Why?" asked the ruffian. "I think you know it very well. Have you been teaching these last four or five years for something else?" she said. Then she raised her left arm showing him the tattoo.

He yanked out a knife, grasped her arm and threatened: "I'll remove it."

She stood contemptuously and said: "I hope you carry out your threat, you who have cut the flesh of so many people among us. But if you take off the inscription I'll make answer here!" and she pointed her finger to her chest.

The officer let go her arm and stroked away infuriated.

That afternoon, she punctured on her right arm another inscription: "Keep up our dignity as revolutionaries!"

The courageous and simple deed of Sister Muoi—an ordinary woman of South Vietnam—has been commented on admiringly by everyone.

(1) Flag of the Saigon administration.

(2) In a song glorifying President Ho Chi Minh by Lam Huu Thuc.

(3) The story occurred under Ngo Dinh Diem's regime.